

Independent

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www.dailyindependent.com.pk

Gwadar

Ph: 2841470/2841473 Vol: XIX No. 254, Shaban 13, 1445 AH Saturday February 24, 2024, Pages 04, Price Rs.15



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki photographed with Senior Officers, Secretaries of Provincial Government and Inspector General of Police after a dinner hosted in their honour

BAP, NP & ANP obtain one reserved seat each: PML-N, PPP secure four each, JUI-F gets two reserved seats in Balochistan Assembly

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) secured four each reserved seats of women and minorities in Balochistan's provincial assembly.

Similarly, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-F (JUI-F) obtained three reserved seats while Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), National Party and ANP got one each reserved seat for women in the provincial assembly.

According to the notification of the reserved seats in Balochistan Assembly issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan on Friday, the PML-N's Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, Hadia Nawaz and Rubaba Khan Buledi were elected as members of the provincial assembly on the seats reserved for women in Balochistan Assembly, on the basis of priority list provided by the respective party.

Similarly, the PPP's Ms. Ghazala Gola, Mina Majeed and Shahnaz Umrani were elected as the members of provincial assembly on the seats reserved for women while JUI-F's Ms. Shahida Rauf and Ms. Safia were also elected as the members of provincial assembly on the reserved seats for women.

Ms. Farah Azeem Shah of BAP, Ms. Umme Kulsom and ANP's Salma Bibi were also elected as the members of provincial assembly on the seats reserved for women in the provincial assembly.

While on the other hand, as far seats reserved for minorities, PML-N, PPP and JUI secured one seat each.

The PML-N's Patrick Sant Maseih, PPP's Sanjay Kumar and JUI's Ravi Pahuja were declared successful on the seats reserved for minorities in the provincial assembly.

It may be mentioned here that PML-N and PPP had secured 10 general seats each in the Balochistan Assembly. However, their total strength reaches 13 and 12 after five more members-elect joined the two parties respectively. Three members-elect joined PPP while two joined PML-N increasing the tally of members to 13 each.

JUI-F's nine candidates were elected members of provincial assembly in the February 8 elections. BAP, NP and ANP secured four, three and two general seats in the elections respectively.

One each candidate of BNP-Awami, BNP-Mengal, Jama'at-e-Islami and Haq Do Tehreek had also won the general elections from their respective constituencies.

Punjab MPs take oath in inaugural session of assembly

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Assembly Speaker Muhammad Sibtain Khan administered oath to the newly-elected members of the Punjab Assembly (PA) during the 42nd session at the assembly chambers here on Friday.

The speaker chaired the session and felicitated the 315 members provincial assembly (MPAs) on taking oath of their. He expressed the hope that they will discharge their duties to the aspirations of the masses.

Earlier, the PA session started two hours behind its scheduled time of 10 am. Punjab Assembly Secretary Amer Habib, on the directions of the Chair, announced the Panel of Chairman comprising MPAs Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan, Syed Ali Haider Gilani, Saima Kanwal and Raheela Naeem. The Secretary also announced

the announced a schedule of the election to the office of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker PA.

According to the schedule, the nomination papers for the Speaker and Deputy Speaker may be submitted by 5 pm on Friday (today). The scrutiny of the nomination papers for the Speaker will be held at 5.10 pm while scrutiny of the Deputy Speaker's nomination papers will be at 5.20 pm.

The election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker will be held on February 24, 2024 (Saturday) through secret ballot in the assembly chambers.

Pakistan declares Israeli actions in Gaza against int'l laws, human rights

Law Minister calls Israeli occupation of West Bank, East Jerusalem illegal; Pakistan supports two-state solution; Terms Israel settlement policy making ending its prolonged occupation more difficult

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan on Friday joined over 50 countries in advancing its argument in the historic proceedings being conducted by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague to rule on the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories by Israel.

The ruling would take several weeks and would not be binding, but many observers believe that if the ICJ declares the occupation illegal, that would certainly put pressure on Tel Aviv.

The proceedings kicked off on February 19 and would continue until February 26.

BAP president Nawabzada Khalid Magasi led the delegation that also included Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani and others.

He said formation of government and other issues were discussed during the meeting adding BAP leadership had decided to support PML-N at the Center and in Balochistan.

Balochistan Awami Party to support PML-N

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) has announced its political support to Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz in the center and Balochistan province.

BAP spokesperson Senator Kohda Babar Friday informed media persons that a delegation of BAP had met PM-nominated Miran Shehbaz Sharif in Lahore.

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To ensure macroeconomic stability IMF hints at working with newly elected government of Pakistan

Says during the tenure of the interim government, authorities "maintained economic stability"

ISLAMABAD (INP): A day after the PTI said founder Imran Khan would write to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) urging it to call for an independent audit of the Feb 8 general elections, the Fund stated that it is looking forward to engaging with the new government on policies to ensure "macroeconomic stability and prosperity for all of Pakistan's citizens".

On Thursday, PTI's Senator Ali Zafar had told reporters that a letter would be sent from Imran to the international lender. He said the IMF, the European Union and other organisations had a charter that stated that good governance was needed for working in the country or giving a loan.

"The most important condition for good governance is democracy," he said, adding that the people's mandate was stolen "in the darkness of the night" during the Feb 8 polls. He said that if elections were not free and fair, any organisation would avoid giving a "loan" to such a country. "Because that loan will further burden the people," he said. He said the PTI wanted an audit of the election results and that condition would be put in front of the IMF.

He said that country could not tolerate instability, adding that continues steps would be taken to strengthen the country and provide relief to people.

Murad Ali Shah nominated as Sindh CM

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Friday formally announced that Syed Murad Ali Shah will be the next Chief Minister Sindh while Syed Awais Shah and Naveed Anthony will be the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of Sindh Assembly.

Addressing PPP Sindh's Parliamentary party meeting here at Bilawal House, Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari said the provincial government will have to show better performance and those educational institutions (Schools) destroyed during 2022 floods should be rehabilitated.

As far as performance is concerned, Sindh Govt should have to compete with Federal and other provincial governments, Bilawal maintained.

He said Agha Siraj Durrani performed well as Speaker Sindh Assembly and now we have decided to get our young members to lead the provincial legislature.

Bilawal said oath-taking of Sindh Assembly members will be held tomorrow (Saturday) and the process for the formation of the new elected government will be started.

Habibur Rehman posted as Special Secretary S&GAD

QUETTA: The Pakistan Civil Service (BCS) Officer of Grade-19, Habibur Rehman, awaiting posting order, has been posted as the Special Secretary Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD), Government of Balochistan.

This was announced in an official notification issued by the S&GAD here on Friday.

15th Pakistan Pediatric Conference begins in Quetta: Provision of basic healthcare facilities at doorstep of people big challenge, says Governor

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that it is a big challenge for the government to provide basic healthcare facilities to the people at their doorstep mainly due to scattered population in the province.

The Governor regretfully pointed out that our innocent children are seen while working at different shops, hotels, garages and garbage dumps. He said that the illiterate people who are in the trap of poverty can't do anything for education and treatment of their children. Mr. Kakar also noted that hundreds of people die of the treatable diseases such as malaria, hepatitis, polio and tuberculosis every year in the present developed era.

JCP recommends Justice Afghan's elevation to SC, Justice Shahzad as LHC CJ

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP) has recommended the elevation of Balochistan High Court (BHC) Chief Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan to the Supreme Court and appointment of Justice Malik Shahzad Ahmad Khan as chief justice of the Lahore High Court (LHC).

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Qazi Faez Isa chaired the JCP meeting which was held in Islamabad on Friday.

Both the recommendations were made with the consensus of the JCP members.

Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan maintains: Interim Govt ensured holding of peaceful elections, defended rights of province at every forum

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has stated that the interim provincial government not only ensured holding of general elections in extraordinary circumstances of the province but also defended its rights at every forum.

He said provision of healthcare, education and other basic facilities to the people and above all establishment of law and order in the province was no less than a challenge.

The caretaker Chief Minister also said that the interim government played key role for resolving the public issues besides executing pending development projects.

Mr. Domki was addressing the gathering of dinner reception hosted for the administrative secretaries and other high ups here on Friday.

The caretaker Chief Minister praised the co-operation of senior and hard working officers in resolving the public issues besides conducting the general elections in the province in peaceful manner.

He referred different projects completed in short span of time of caretaker set up. He said that we completed certain collective nature projects in short span of time which otherwise were pending in the province.

Unity vital to steer country out of challenges: Shehbaz Sharif

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz President Shehbaz Sharif said on Friday that forging unity was essential to steer country out of existing challenges.

In a statement issued here, he said that collective efforts were direly needed for country's development and prosperity.

Shehbaz Sharif said that ensuring economic stability in the country was his top priority.

He said that country could not tolerate instability, adding that continues steps would be taken to strengthen the country and provide relief to people.

"PML-N would take the country out of crisis under the dynamic leadership of PML-N Quaid Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif", he maintained.

During his visit to Kartarpur Corridor in Narowal, the president said that Pakistan, through the corridor, had conveyed a message to the world, expressing its desire for peace.

He said such additional steps of inter-religion harmony would eventually promote peace and stability in the region.

"Sikhism has always taught peace and unity, bringing people together", President Alvi said adding Pakistan's initiatives for the convenience of Sikh pilgrims, were commendable.

On the occasion, Chief Executive Officer of the Project Management Unit briefed the president on the measures taken to facilitate Sikh pilgrims in Kartarpur Sahib.

Dr. Amir Muhammad Jozezai meets Zubair Jamali: Performance of LEAs lauded for provision of peaceful environment during elections

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Health, Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jozezai has appreciated the performance of law enforcement agencies for providing peaceful environment to the voters during general elections in the province.

Dr. Amir Muhammad Khan Jozezai was speaking to the caretaker Provincial Minister for Home, Captain (Retd) Mir Muhammad Zubair Jamali during a meeting on Friday.

The caretaker Minister for Health on the occasion congratulated the caretaker Minister for Home and his whole team on peaceful holding of the elections in Balochistan.

Meanwhile, Mir Zubair Jamali apprised Dr. Jozezai about different steps taken for public welfare.

During the course of meeting, different administrative matters and situation of law and order were also discussed.

Kiran Haider, Akhtar Bibi, Izbal Zehri and Aliya Kamran elected as MNAs on seats reserved for women

Independent Report
QUETTA: The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) got two seats reserved for women in National Assembly from Balochistan. Similarly, Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) secured one seat each reserved for women in the National Assembly from the province, as per the notification issued here by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday.

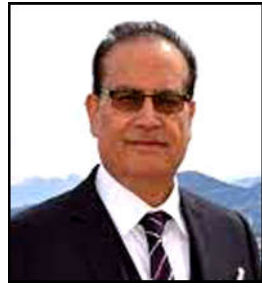
According to the ECP's notification, PML-N's Ms. Kiran Haider and Akhtar Bibi were declared winner on the seats reserved for women in the National Assembly. Similarly, PPP's Izbal Zehri and JUI's Ms. Aliya Kamran were also elected as the members of National Assembly from Balochistan province.

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Seeking IMF's help; PTI's Misguided Move

By Qamar Bashir

Former Press Secretary to the President; Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France; Former MD, SRBC



What next for PTI?

The incoming government has been carved up. With the major offices apportioned between the PML-N and PPP, the political hyenas will also be thrown a few bones.

One of them wants a few ministries; the other whatever morsel the new government can still spare. The incoming minority government will need as many lawmakers as it can afford by its side. Within days, this new political alliance will take control. On the other hand, the opposition, led by the PTI, has yet to find its feet. Since far exceeding expectations in the Feb 8 elections, it has not seemed too sure about what to do with its numbers. Though its government in KP is secure, it had also made claims on both Islamabad and Punjab. It has yet to show how it ever planned on forming the governments there after the ECP's results put it well short of a simple majority in both assemblies.

The PTI could go on making a 'moral' claim on the two assemblies, but that is not how executive power is secured. In the interim, its only option was to secure enough votes for its candidates from other parties. It chose not to. Further, though it merged with the Sunni Ittehad Council, that hardly improved its prospects. It is good for the party that, barring a handful, it managed to keep most of its elected lawmakers, and the merger will prevent any further defections; however, it seems unlikely it will get a share of reserved seats despite this move.

Therefore, barring a very significant revision in the ECP's announced results, the party seems destined to sit on the opposition benches. Is it prepared to do so? It needs strong leaders to guide the party in the assemblies and organise an effective opposition. Most of its old guard is gone, and its leader is in jail.

Perhaps the party really had not expected to be handed such a large mandate — this may explain the disarray within its ranks since the results. Perhaps it never intended to form the government, knowing well the difficult conditions in which it would be taking over; consider that neither did the PML-N and PPP seem too enthusiastic about their decision, till they were 'convinced' by higher powers. However, even the opposition needs coherent strategies if it wants to assert itself strongly. Even with the number of seats the PTI officially has, it remains in a good position to make things quite difficult for the PML-N, especially when the PPP's support for the government is subject to terms and conditions. Will it be able to capitalise, though? The opposition's success will hinge on a leadership that is reasonable and able to talk to other parties. Will the PTI be able to overcome itself?

The decision by the former PTI chairman to petition the IMF for an electoral audit of disputed election results struck many, including myself and various opinion leaders, as a startling and misguided move. This request, especially coming from a party with a strong legal cadre, seemed out of place given the IMF's well-defined mandate. The IMF focuses on international monetary stability and economic support, dealing with financial assistance, economic stability, and growth through policy reforms.

It does not involve itself in a nation's electoral matters or judicial grievances, which are sovereign issues. The appeal to the IMF for electoral scrutiny not only deviates from its established role but also risks diminishing our standing by misunderstanding the scope of international institutions.

The decision by PTI's leadership to seek IMF intervention in electoral matters might reflect a profound mistrust in national institutions. This disillusionment could stem from various grievances: the establishment's overt antagonism, the Elec-

tion Commission's invalidation of PTI's internal elections and subsequent stripping of its election symbol, which critically weakened the party's standing. Additionally, the overwhelming legal challenges faced by the PTI chairman, with over 200 cases lodged against him, and a perceived judicial ineffectiveness, where court orders seem disregarded and the only recourse for arrested and humiliated PTI members appears to be public disavowal of their allegiance, further exacerbate this trust deficit.

The erosion of trust in the judiciary was compounded when the Supreme Court confirmed the Election Commission's decision to strip PTI of its election symbol. This sentiment deepened with a landmark ruling that invalidated Imran Khan's marriage to Bushra Bibi, a decision unprecedented in the context of Islamic jurisprudence. Successive convictions of Imran Khan in high-profile cases, such as the Cypher, Toshakhana, and the legality of his marriage, further alienated PTI supporters, especially as numerous other legal challenges loom on the horizon.

The disillusionment with the country's institutions extended to the pre-election phase, where PTI faced considerable obstacles in organizing public gatherings. When these events did proceed, media coverage was often suppressed. The shift to digital campaigning saw further challenges, with internet and mobile services being disrupted or throttled. This not only targeted PTI but also impacted businesses, trade, and the broader populace, exacerbating the already compromised reputation of the nation.

Some may argue that involving an international entity like the IMF could introduce transparency and impartiality into the audit process, addressing the trust deficit with domestic institutions. This approach might not only ensure fairer electoral practices but also spotlight alleged irregularities on a global stage, fostering international advocacy for democratic integrity in Pakistan. Conversely, this strategy might displease even some PTI supporters who favor internal resolution of issues, fearing it could fragment the party's unity.

They contend that despite the flaws of national institutions, struggles should remain within the constitutional and legal boundaries, advocating for a domestic, democratic push for reform without foreign intervention or influence on sovereign matters. Critics argue that while such actions might not directly harm the establishment, judiciary, or government officials who would continue to receive

their salaries, the real brunt of economic fallout from a halted IMF negotiation, prompted by PTI's request, would be borne by the common people. This could exacerbate unemployment and inflation, already at record highs, pushing millions more into poverty. They suggest learning from past experiences, like the repercussions of alleged foreign involvement in regime change, which cost PTI its government and led to legal troubles for its members. Instead of risking further isolation and legal action by engaging with international bodies like the IMF in domestic political disputes, they advocate for a more cautious approach that avoids giving the government and establishment reasons to target PTI and its leadership.

Critics might argue that soliciting foreign intervention in political and electoral issues could be perceived as undermining national sovereignty, potentially fueling nationalist and anti-PTI sentiment. Such a move risks politically isolating the PTI both within Pakistan and on the international stage, as it could be viewed as an excessive measure or a misuse of international institutions for domestic political conflicts. This strategy could arm opponents with grounds to accuse PTI of treason, leading to possible legal actions against its leaders, a ban on the party, and the nullification of its electoral achievements in 2024.

Furthermore, there's concern that this approach could prompt a coordinated media and civil society backlash against PTI, labeling the act as unpatriotic and anti-state. Prime time TV shows might be pressured to denounce PTI's actions, while ad campaigns across traditional and social media could further condemn the party. Engagement of civil society groups to criticize PTI could lead to a significant loss of the political capital the party gained following its strong performance in the 2024 elections, especially if media outlets that had previously shifted their support towards PTI due to perceived election rigging and the treatment of its members reverse their stance. Media analysts might critique PTI for its tendency to repeat past mistakes without considering the broader implications for national sovereignty and dignity. Despite PTI's professed commitment to upholding the country's honor, its actions, perceived as impulsive, often put its narrative and principles at risk. This pattern of behavior, as observed by commentators, suggests a cycle where lessons from previous setbacks are

not fully absorbed or integrated into future strategies, challenging the party's ability to maintain its narrative consistency and political credibility. Now that the arrow has been fired, and damage has been done, the PTI should adopt a comprehensive and sustained strategy to damage control.

They should give positive spin to this blunder by framing PTI's decision to internationalize the issue of electoral integrity in Pakistan to the party's commitment to transparency and fair play, highlighting how this unprecedented step could pave the way for more accountable electoral processes. The narrative could focus on the need for impartial oversight in the face of domestic challenges and frame the move as a proactive approach to safeguarding democracy. This spin would portray PTI as a forward-thinking party willing to explore all avenues to ensure the sanctity of the electoral process, thus aligning its actions with global best practices for democratic governance. Open dialogue, transparency in their actions, and a unified front from leadership at all levels will be crucial in navigating criticism and reinforcing the party's commitment to strengthening Pakistan's democratic processes.

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Commerce News

Punjab Governor says: Caretaker Punjab govt taken commendable steps for the welfare of the people

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Minister, Ibrahim Hasan Murad paid a farewell call on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House Lahore. During the meeting, the provincial minister briefed the Governor Punjab in detail about the measures taken to improve the performance of the departments of Local Government, Transport, Livestock and Mines as the caretaker provincial minister. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said that the

caretaker Punjab government has taken commendable steps for the welfare of the people under the leadership of caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi, in a short period of time. He said that the government formation phase has started, it is hoped that the newly elected government will bring more improvement and stability in the country. He further said that political stability is indispensable for economic stability in the country. He said that all political parties should play a positive role for the development and prosperity of the country and the nation while keeping their personal interest aside. Caretaker Provincial Minister Ibrahim Hasan Murad said that he did not take privileges as a Caretaker Provincial Minister. He said and added that he and the Caretaker Cabinet tried hard to serve the people in a short period of time and bring improvements in the system. He said that as a provincial minister, he made various reforms in his respective departments, which increased the revenue of the departments.



NAROWAL: President Dr Arif Alvi visiting different sections of the Kartarpur Corridor.

Federal Ombudsman for Insurance organizes national conference

LAHORE (APP): The Federal Ombudsman for Insurance organized a two-day 4th annual national conference at its regional office, focusing on reviewing the department's performance over the previous and current years. The conference also included a briefing on the redressal of public complaints related to insurance companies. The event was attended by all regional heads of the

DIG for ensuring foolproof security on Shab-e-Barat

LARKANA (APP): DIG Larkana Aftab Nasir has put the Larkana police range on high alert while directing all the SSPs to ensure safe security on the night of Shab-e-Barat. The police spokesman informed here on Friday that the SSPs had been directed to deploy policemen at all the mosques, imambargahs, shrines and graveyards. He added that the DIG had emphasized taking strict action against aerial firing and the sale as well as the use of fireworks.

PDC celebrates white coat ceremony

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Peshawar Dental College (PDC) hosted its prestigious White Coat Ceremony, a significant event attended by esteemed figures in the medical field, dedicated faculty members, enthusiastic students, and proud parents. The event featured key personalities, including CEO Dr. Ifthikhar Husam, Prof. Dr. Hafeez ur Rahman, Dean, PMC, Prof. Dr. Saeed Anwar Executive Director, Prof. Dr. Mohammad Aman Khan, Principal, PMC, and Prof. Dr. Shamim Akhtar, Principal, PDC. Dr. Saba Siraj skillfully managed the proceedings as the stage secretary. Addressing the



LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Minister, Ibrahim Hasan Murad paid a farewell call on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman at Governor House.



LAHORE: Speaker Punjab Assembly Sardar Muhammad Sibtain Khan talking with media persons during first session of Punjab Assembly in the Provincial Capital.

ANF recovers 331 kg drugs in 10 operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan while conducting 10 operations across the country managed to recover over 331 kg of drugs and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday. He informed that 10.5 kg heroin was recovered from a parcel being sent to the UK at Cargo Office Islamabad while an accused was also arrested. In another operation, 2.5 kg of Ice was recovered from a parcel being sent to Sri Lanka at the Lahore

World Bank delegation visits GCU

LAHORE (APP): A delegation from the World Bank, led by Senior Economist Ms. Inga Afanasieva and Education Specialist Ms. Tashmina Rahman, visited the GC University Lahore along with the Higher Education Development Project (HEDP) team led by Project Director Dr. Mahmood Ul Hassan Butt. The delegation engaged in discussions with Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Adnan Ahmad and university officials, including Prof. Dr. Hamid Mukhtar, Director of the Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC), Dr. Fouzia Shahin, Director of Academic Planning & External Linkages (AP&EL). The World Bank and HEDP teams were briefed about the operations of GCU's administrative and academic departments, the implementation of the revised Undergraduate Education Policy (UEP), including student support internship support mechanisms, and the role of HEDP in promoting academic reforms.

Call for showcasing KP's historical significance through digital media

PESHAWAR (APP): Pass. Bakhtzada Khan, senior research officer, archeology department told APP on Friday that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa carried one of the richest histories in the subcontinent where followers of almost all religions had come and stayed for the accomplishment of their political, trade and business objectives. Resultantly, different religions including Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Christianity gained roots for many years in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa before Islam. He said the discovery of human remains in Soan Valley in Pakistani Punjab province as evidence of the stones and bones' tools dating from around 2 million to 90,000 years before present) of the Early Paleolithic period had signified that people were living here. "Sangaro cave's excavations at village Mian Khan in Mardan district conducted by renowned archeologists Ahmad Hasan Dhani and Farid Khan in 1963 had revealed the presence of people's remains in the Middle Paleolithic period (9,000 to 27,000 years before present) in KP." These people were living in stones-made

caves, who fulfilled their food's needs mostly from hunting of birds and animals. The discoveries of primitive rocks, bones and hunting tools dating back of Mesolithic or Middle Stone Age (10,000 to 8,600 years before present) during excavations at Khanpur in Haripur district and Sangaro Cave signified presence of humans' life in Swat and Dir where every stone speaks about their life style, culture, livelihood and civilizations, he informed. It was found that people started making clay and stones made pots, crockery and others related utensils for kitchen during Neolithic period or commonly known as new stone-age dating back some 8,000 years before as evident from excavations of historic Mehar Gharh in Balochistan of the Indus Civilization, Rehman Dheri DI Khan and Sheri Khan Tarkai Swabi. These strong evidence had magnified that people were living in the stone and mud houses in those primordial era. The graves of Aryans invaders were also discovered at Aligram Swat, Sangota Chitral and Timergara Dir Lower dating back of the Dark Ages period of around 2,000BC.



PESHAWAR: Activists of Markazi Muslim League (PMML) are holding protest demonstration against supreme court ruling, at Peshawar press club.

CPEC projects underway in Pakistan to help local economy

BEIJING (APP): A number of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects are making renewed progress as the CPEC, a flagship project under the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), enters its next phase, helping the country to alleviate energy shortages and empowering its economic growth. "Entering 2024, CPEC projects have achieved new progress," the Global Times reported. "The Karot hydropower project, a 720 megawatt (MW) hydropower plant developed on the Jhelum River in Pakistan and the first ever large-scale hydropower project under the BRI, has generated a total of 3.1 billion kilowatt

hours of electricity in 2023," China Three Gorges Corporation, which invested in and is leading construction of the project, announced on its website. In December, two China-donated projects, including a seawater desalination plant and the upgrade of the Pak-China Friendship Hospital, were inaugurated in the Gwadar district of southwestern Balochistan province. The desalination plant will provide 5,000 tons per day of potable water to help address a severe drinking water shortage, while the Pak-China Friendship Hospital has boosted its capacity to 150 beds from the original 50. "At the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant, the K2 and K3 units that both use Hualong One, China's third-generation nuclear power reactor with full intellectual property rights, are churning out a combined 20 billion kilowatt hours each year, satisfying the production and residential electricity use of two million people while saving energy equivalent to 6.24 million tons of standard coal," the Global Times learned from China National Nuclear Corporation. In July last year, Unit 5 (C-5) of the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant broke ground, marking the 7th nuclear reactor exported from China to Pakistan. "Pakistan is on the right side of history by

All possible facilities to be ensured for Hujjaj intending hajj 2024: Aneeq

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed Friday said that all possible facilities will be provided to Pakistani pilgrims during this year's hajj where special training programs were also being conducted at the district level through camps managed by the religious affairs ministry. In an exclusive interview with PTV news channel, he said that under the supervision of the Pakistan Hajj mission special catering companies were being arranged to feed pilgrims under a government scheme and will ensure quality and safety standards at every step. Minister said that this year Pakistan Hajj mission is offering simplified transportation services to Pakistani pilgrims with standard buses ensuring round-the-clock, adding that, the transport department will fully dedicate themselves to the sacred duty. A comprehensive transportation guidelines had also been issued at each building, he added. The caretaker government had introduced several new services for the pilgrims to help them perform the rituals with comfort and ease, he mentioned. Monitoring Cell has been put in place to closely

Majlis Fikr-o-Danish calls for forming empowered & trusted Provincial HEC

Independent Report QUETTA: The Quetta Majlis Fikr-o-Danish (think tank) has outlined the need to form an empowered and trustworthy Provincial Higher Education Commission (HEC) for complete overhauling and cleansing of the public sector universities in the province. In a statement issued here on Friday, it was regretfully pointed out that the deteriorated situation of the public sector universities and higher institutions of the research has turned more serious due to the negligence and carelessness of the previous governments. As a result of which, the materialization of dream of creation of useful and constructive environment is seen nearly impossible. Due to the situation, the mother educational institution of the province i.e., University of Balochistan is heading towards closure while the overall situation of higher technical educational institution i.e., Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUTEMS) has also become worst. While on the other hand, the only women university (SBKWU) has also become hub of male interference and political and wisdom weakness. It was also stated that there's a question of survival of the institutions in case of the non-payment of salaries of the employees. It was stressed that there is also dire need to stop wastage and plundering of the resources for building scientific narrative besides promoting research and creativity.



NAROWAL: President Dr. Arif Alvi being briefed about Kartarpur Corridor at Zero Line/International Border.



QUETTA: Chief Executive Officer of BRSP Tahir Rasheed meeting with Vice Chancellor BUTEMS Prof. Dr. Khalid Hafeez.

Free treatment of heart patient kids starts at SMBZAN ICQ

Independent Report QUETTA: The free treatment of heart patient children has been started at the Sheikh Muhammad Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (SMBZAN) Institute of Cardiology Quetta (ICQ) here. According to an official handout issued here on Friday, the free treatment of the children suffering from heart diseases has been started in collaboration with the National Institute of Cardiology and Vascular Diseases (NICVD). The treatment of patients would remain continued from March 9-10. The Head of Pediatric Cardiology, NICVD, Dr. Abdul Sattar Sheikh would provide services at the OPD. Moreover, the expert doctors of NICVD would also perform the operations, angioplasty and other complicated procedures of the heart patient children.

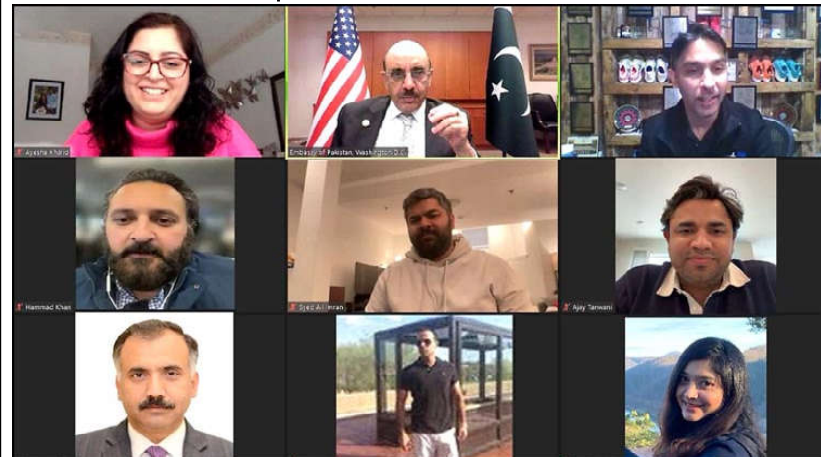
Five injured in Darazinda motorbike blast

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Five people were injured in an explosion that occurred in the main Bazaar of Tehsil Darazinda on Friday.

According to a Rescue 1122 spokesman, the explosive device, planted on a motorbike parked near a local hotel in the Bazaar exploded due to which five people got injured. The medical teams of Rescue 1122 immediately reached the site and shifted the injured people to the hospital. Two of the injured persons are in critical condition.

Masood lauds contributions of Pak diaspora in US

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan said Pakistani professionals are not only making their mark in their respective fields but are also proving themselves as the most abiding link between Pakistan and the United States. He made these remarks during an e-meeting with the leadership of NUSTIAN-US which is a network of around 1200 US-based alumni of National University of Sciences and Technology. He said we are proud of the contributions of our diaspora in the United States as well as in the country of their origin. The Ambassador said the Embassy is actively engaged in connecting professional organizations of Pakistani Americans who are serving the country in various walks of life.



UNITED STATES: Ambassador Masood Khan e-meeting with Dr. Muniba Agboatwalla Founder & Chairperson of HOPE Pakistan and its Director Ambreen Siddiqui.

DEO distributes appointment orders among 16 relatives of employees in Lasbela

QUETTA (APP): District Education Officer (DEO) Lasbela Muhammad Anwar Jamali on Friday distributed appointment orders among 16 relatives of employees who had died in Education Department Lasbela. The Ceremony was attended by District Officer Education (Male) Lasbela Haji Naveed Ahmed Hashmi, GTA Lasbela Chairman Abdul Wahid Soomro, Ahmed Khan Ronjho and others organized by DEO of Lasbela. On this occasion, District Officer Education (Male) Lasbela Haji Naveed Ahmed Hashmi, Chairman of GTA Lasbela Abdul Wahid Soomro spoke and congratulated the candidates recruited on the quota.

DC Duki reviews steps of annual admission drive in govt schools

QUETTA (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Duki Captain (Rtd) Fayyaz Ali on Friday chaired a meeting of the District Education Group to review measures of Annual admission drive in government schools in the area. The meeting was attended by District Education Officer (DEO) Naseebullah Nasir, Education Manager Ubaid Khan Tareen, DDOE Thal Faqirullah Tareen, Senior Clerk Mujibur Rahman Tareen, CPD Officer Muhammad Aslam and others. It was decided in the meeting that action will be taken against the absent officers of District Education Group and the Annual enrollment campaign would be vigorously pursued so that more and more children could be equipped with the jewel of education. The meeting said that the target of 1384 of children would be achieved during the drive saying that he would cooperate with the district administration and Education Department to get the target of campaign for interest.



QUETTA: Provincial Secretary Health Abdullah Khan presiding over a meeting regarding Physiotherapy department.

UoG's Art and Film making competition wraps up with glitzy ceremony

Independent Report QUETTA: The Art and Film Making competition concluded with a grand finale over two eventful days at the Gwadar University. The event showcased an array of creativity and talent from budding artists and filmmakers. The closing ceremony was held at the main seminar Hall of the University. The event was attended by esteemed personalities including Moulana Hidayath Ur Rehman, Worthy Vice-Chancellor of Gwadar University Prof. Abdul Razzaq Sabir, Deputy Commissioner Gwadar Aurang Zaib Badini, Principal GDA Raja Imtiaz Hussain, Registrar University Dolat Khan, Dean Faculty of Social Science Prof. Dr. Jan Muhammad, Competition Judges, guests, Senior Faculty members and students. More than a hundred participants participated in the competition. The two-day event was attended by a large number of people who witnessed fierce competition in various categories ranging from painting and sketches to short film production. During the closing ceremony, the Vice-Chancellor of the university Prof. Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir commended the participants for their exceptional talent and dedication to the arts. He emphasized the importance of such events in fostering creativity and innovation among the youth, urging the participants to continue pursuing their artistic endeavors. The Vice-Chancellor appreciated the efforts of the organizers of the event. He also congratulated the winners of the inter-university level competition which was organized by NAB Balochistan last year. The chief guest of the event, newly elected MPA Gwadar Maulana Hidayath ur Rehman said that Gwadar should be recognized not only because of CPEC but also because of our talented youth. Humans can reach the sky with their hard work and abilities. The region needs talented people and universities are the only institutions that produce talented people. Deputy Commissioner Gwadar, Aurang Zaib Badini, also graced the occasion with his presence, lauding the efforts of the university in organizing such a vibrant and inclusive competition. He highlighted the significance of art and filmmaking in cultural expression and community development.

ECP allocates Punjab's reserved NA women seats

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has unveiled the allotment of 20 reserved seats for women in the National Assembly from Punjab, with the majority going to the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N). The ECP spokesperson mentioned that the commission is currently reviewing the issue concerning the allocation of reserved seats for the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC). According to the ECP, the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) received 17 seats, with one seat each allocated to the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the Pakistan Muslim League, and Itehad-e-Pakistan Party.

Tharabi Lake contract: Court sends Imran Riaz to jail on judicial remand

LAHORE (APP): A local court on Friday sent anchorperson Imran Riaz Khan to jail on judicial remand in a case of acquiring the Tharabi Lake contract at reduced prices. Earlier, the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab officials produced the anchorperson before Judicial Magistrate Imran Abid, in district courts, and requested a 14-day physical remand for investigations. However, Imran Riaz's counsel argued that the case was registered in violation of the law, adding that no evidence was available to prove the charges. The court, after hearing detailed arguments of parties, reserved its judgement on the remand plea for a short while. Later, the court, announcing the reserved verdict, turned down the plea for physical remand and sent the anchorperson to jail on judicial remand.

Country to make progress: Dar

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz Senator Ishaq Dar said on Friday that he was not sure that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder had written any letter to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or not. Talking to the media here, Dar said he had heard this on the media and if the PTI founder had written any letter to the IMF it was highly condemnable. Ishaq Dar said: "If any one does such thing and prefers personal political interest over the country's economic interest it is not only regrettable but also strongly condemnable action." He said with the grace of Allah, The Almighty, the country would make progress. Reacting to Indian

PTI founder, Bushra could not be indicted in 190m pounds scam

RAWALPINDI (Online): Judge Nasir Javed Rana of Special Accountability Court of Islamabad has adjourned hearing of Al-Qadir Trust case based on 190 million pounds financial scandal against PTI founder and his wife Bushra Begum till February 27 without proceedings. Due to it both the accused persons could not be indicted. Both of the accused were present in the court along with their lawyers Usman Gull and Zahir Abbas. Deputy Prosecutor General (DPG) NAB Sardar Muzaffar Abbasi also appeared along with his team. Former chairman PTI embraced Bushra Bibi in the court room as soon as they came face to face as both of them met each other after two and half weeks in the court. Both the accused were to be indicted. However the lawyers of the accused filed application in the court for providing them copies of the reference.

PML-N fields Malik, Zaheer for PA speaker, deputy speaker posts

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) has fielded Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan and Zaheer Iqbal Channar for the posts of speaker and deputy speaker of the Punjab Assembly. The party has already nominated Maryam Nawaz as the chief minister Punjab. The Punjab Assembly will meet on Saturday to elect the speaker and deputy speaker to the House during the 42nd session at the assembly chambers. Incumbent Speaker Muhammad Sibtain Khan has convened the PA session at 4 p.m. on Saturday (tomorrow) in the assembly chambers and he'll chair the session. The PML-N is the majority party in the PA, and its nominees—Malik Muhammad Ahmed and Zaheer Channar—have submitted their nomination papers for their election as the speaker and deputy speakers. On the other hand, Sunni Ittehad Council nominees, Malik Ahmad Khan Bachar and Moeen-ul-Din Riaz Qureshi have also submitted their nomination papers for the speaker.



QUETTA: Members of Jhalawan Awami Penal (JAP) are holding protest demonstration against alleged rigging in General Election 2024, at Quetta press club.

AJK PM urges UN to resolve long-pending Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to occupied Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq has urged the United Nations to take measures for settlement of the long-pending Kashmir dispute for permanent peace in the region. He also urged the United Nations to take effective notice of India's expansionist designs in the region. Referring to the disputed nature of the Kashmir dispute, the AJK Prime Minister said, "India cannot change the status of the disputed territory unilaterally." He said that India's August 5th move was the worst example of fascism. Reacting to Indian